

Image not found or type unknown

Crews Head Into Final Day of 49th St. Thomas Regatta After Two Days of Idyllic Sailing Conditions

Sports / **Published On March 26, 2023 07:19 AM /**

Staff Consortium **March 26, 2023**

Image not found or type unknown



The USA's Marc McMorris Cape 31, M2. By. DEAN BARNES.

Crews are in high spirits ahead of the final day of racing at the 49th St. Thomas Regatta, after two days of idyllic sailing conditions.

Friday's first place finishers were Jim Madden's Stark Raving Mad IX, a Carkeek 47 from the USA; Peter Corr's Blitz, a Summit 40 from St. Thomas, Sandra Askew's Flying Jenny, the Cape 31 from the USA which won the pre-Regatta Round the Rocks Race on Thursday; Joan Rodriguez' Lady M, a Beneteau First 40.7 from the Dominican Republic; and Cy Thompson's Bill T, an IC24 from St. Thomas.

“Round the islands racing is much more fun,” said Athony Kotoun, Stark Raving Mad IX’s tactician, comparing the event favorably to his usual fare of windward to leeward courses around buoys. Those, he says “are like NASCAR, all left turns, and it can be boring.”

“It’s really all about sailing at the very top of your game,” said Jaime Torres from Puerto Rico, whose Ione Melges 32 Smile & Wave finished second behind Flying Jenny in the Spinnaker Racing 2 class on Friday.

“The thing we liked best was the start,” said Puerto Rico’s Fernando Montilla, whose Tartan 10 Timon II finished in the middle of the pack in the Racer-Cruiser CSA 3 class. “We had so many boats on the start line and there was so much energy.”

Saturday races resulted in the Spinnaker Racing 0 class now having two boats jostling for top spot, as Ron O’Hanley’s Privateer, a Cookson 50 from the USA, finished first in the final race and won a tiebreaker with Stark Raving Mad IX. Both boats now have 10 points ahead of Sunday’s races. “It will be all about sailing well with no mistakes,” said O’Hanley about today’s competition.

Blitz, Flying Jenny, and Lady M, retained their leads from Friday in their respective classes, with the latter two increasing the point differential between themselves and the second-place competitor. However it was Cy Thompson on Bill T who dominated his class, ending Saturday’s race day with an 18-point lead, something regatta organizers call a likely first in the event’s two-decade-plus history.

The Hobie Wave class had its first day in the water today, with St. Thomas’ Niall Bartlett in the lead at the end of the day. “The wind picked up this afternoon which made it pretty exciting out there,” he said, before praising the class as being a good entry point into the regatta for all age-levels.

The USA’s David McDonough, whose J/42 Trinity finished 8th in the Racer-Cruiser 3 class, perfectly summed up the mood permeating this year’s regatta. “If you look at the big picture, there were blue skies, perfect courses, great conditions. It didn’t matter our place on the scoreboard because we were in heaven.”